

# BUY-LOCAL CAMPAIGN AND PROGRAM FOR THE CITY OF SANTA PAULA



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# INTRODUCTION

From September of 2011 through March of 2012, the California Polytechnic State University of San Luis Obispo's City and Regional Planning department worked with the City of Santa Paula on an update of the City's Downtown Improvement Plan. Following its completion, each individual chose one aspect of the Plan and expanded on it. This project focuses on the creation and implementation of a Buy-Local Program for the City.

A buy-local program will benefit Santa Paula both economically and environmentally, as well as providing the community with health benefits that come from eating fresh, local food. For a city with a struggling economy, it is vital that the community supports local business and farmers. This program will integrate both into one cohesive program that provides restaurants with channels to purchase fresh produce from local farms, while also giving those farms business opportunities that they may not have had in the past.

The goal of the program is to eventually, ideally within five to ten years, become a self-sustaining program that operates on the membership fees collected yearly. Although it will initially operate through a start-up grant from the State, through increased public awareness of the program and enthusiastic participation from members, self-sustainment is a realistic and viable goal.

# PHASE1

Phase 1 of the program establishes the profile of the program, giving an overview of what the programs purpose is. Included will be its mission statement, goals, and slogan. Also included is a description of the benefits a buy-local program can have on a city such as Santa Paula.

## I.1 PROGRAM PROFILE

*Name: Santa Paula Buy Local*

*Slogan: If you like it here, buy it near*

*Logo:*



*Goals:*

- To provide citizens of Santa Paula easy access towards locally grown produce
- Encourage the use of locally grown produce at local restaurants
- Support Santa Paula's own community services
- To support the local economy
- Engage citizens in actively shaping the future economic development of their city

## *Mission Statement*

The Santa Paula Buy Local campaign strives to promote local spending and purchasing of goods from the greater Santa Paula area. Buying local enhances the economic and social vitality of a city and community by involving local residents and businesses. Increased commerce benefits everyone in a city, and the Santa Paula Buy Local campaign is dedicated to doing just that, in order to help make our city a better place.

## 1.2 ANALYSIS OF BENEFITS FROM BUYING LOCAL

### *1.2.1 Health Benefits of Buying Local*

Of the many benefits buying local food and produce offers an individual, the most personal of these is the betterment of one's body. One of the biggest problems with non-local food and produce is the use of pesticides and toxic compounds that can cause illness and other health problems. Studies have linked exposure and ingestion of pesticides to various forms of cancer, such as Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma (United States Environmental Protection Agency, 2007).

While ingesting pesticides is an issue, a bigger problem they create comes from being released into the air. This creates another source of air pollution, equivalent to smog, which can cause a variety of ailments in humans. These ailments include headaches, respiratory illness, and nausea.

Locally grown food and produce is also much fresher than imported products. Products are often harvested and refrigerated during transportation to keep them fresh, which prevents produce from ripening to its maximum flavor. This sequence is avoided with local produce because it goes from the fields straight to the stores, ensuring maximum freshness and taste. Allowing produce to ripen completely also means it will have its full nutritional value intact.

The biggest issue caused with non-local food and produce comes in transportation. As food travels, often times from far away countries, the use of irradiation, preservatives, and other chemicals designed to kill germs and bacteria growth, becomes more prevalent. While the use of some of these chemicals may be banned by the United States, the same cannot be said about the countries these foods are imported from, which means consumers receive food and produce with these chemicals regardless of our counties regulations.

### *1.2.2 Environmental Benefits of Buying Local*

Due to current market conditions, it has become cheaper for companies and stores to purchase goods from faraway countries, primarily to do produce production laws that are more lax in countries abroad. With these lower prices though, comes a strain on the environment and wellbeing of your community. Transportation of these goods produces an estimated one billion metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and uses 11 billion gallons of fuel per year internationally. The primary method of transportation for produce is by sea, where the 15 largest transport ships account for the same pollution emissions in one year, as all the cars in the world emit in that same time period. This is all to transport goods that are already available within most local communities. For example, a carrot, which is available locally and can even be grown in someone's backyard with ease, will travel an average of 1,838 miles before becoming part of a meal.

Buying local supports a more sustainable food system that involves different agricultural methods than large industrial food production. One of the largest benefits to buying local is one that isn't quantifiable. That benefit is the comfort level that comes from buying a locally grown product. Purchasing something grown in your town gives you a level of familiarity and security in the produce, whereas purchasing goods from faraway countries brings a level of uncertainty as to what this good has been through on its way to your town.

The use of pesticides adversely affects soil by decreasing the biodiversity. Biodiversity increases the possibility for the types of crops and other harvest that a soil can support. In essence, the use of pesticides prohibits the number of products that soil can be used for. Pesticides also impact plants in the area by killing bees, a useful source of pollination for many plants. Without the bees, some plants will not receive the pollen they need to survive. This leads to poor root hair development in plants, shoot yellowing, and reduced growth among plants.

Another issue that arises from pesticides is water quality. After being absorbed into the soil, pesticides join with water and run-off into streams and groundwater swells. This is just one way for pesticides to make it to water sources. It can drift outside the intended area when sprayed and reach water, or it can travel through the soil until finding water as well. An excess amount of pesticides can lead to undrinkable water.



### *1.2.3 Economic Effects of Buying Local*

Although buying local carries the obvious message of supporting local businesses, or being a community morale boost, it is much more than that. Buying local helps more money stay within the city, helping advance the economy. In fact, when purchases are local, twice as much money stays within the city compared to an imported product. A study in Austin, Texas found that for every \$100 spent at a local bookstore, \$45 of that went towards local economic activity, while at the national chain Borders, only \$13 went towards the local economy.

Local economies function at their best when money stays in circulation. That means money that is spent within the city, for instance buying local produce from a supermarket, should then be spent by the supermarket on products and goods from that same city. When money is spent outside of a city, on products such as online retailers and big box stores, it leads to the creation of more “cookie cutter” Main Streets, with nationally owned chain retailers and restaurants.

According to Susan Witt of the E.F. Schumacher Society, buy local campaigns also serve to alert the community about gaps within their local markets. Witt used the example of socks. If consumers are always looking towards on-line or big box stores for sock purchasing, that signals to there is an opportunity for someone local to step in to the sock market and shift the focus back towards local. In addition to providing socks, the producer also should be taking advantage of their location to encourage purchasing. For instance, if this city was an area where sheep are raised, the producer might make wool socks to provide an alternative to standard cotton the big box or on-line retailers would provide.

The one negative of buying local, on an individual level, is the higher cost of local goods. In most cases it is, admittedly, hard to beat the prices of large retailers. This price difference is erased when all factors are taken into consideration though. The increased circulation of money through a city necessitates more jobs, which is an enormous positive, especially when compared to the loss of employment national chains bring. For example, the opening of a single Wal-Mart reduces employment in the county of its location by around 150 jobs.

This increased circulation helps enhance the “velocity” of money within a city. The concept of velocity is that if currency circulates faster, the money passes through more hands, and more people have had the benefit of that money and what it has purchased for them. The money goes directly towards whatever local store earns it, where it is then put back into supplies and upkeep, advertising, paying employees, etc. – it all goes directly back into the community.

# PHASE<sup>2</sup>

Phase 2 focuses on the creation of the program, and its designation as a nonprofit organization. It establishes purchasing regulations for between farmers and restaurants, namely that the program will be the intermediary and monitor all purchasing to ensure fairness.

## 2.1 SANTA PAULA BUY-LOCAL CREATION

### *2.1.1 Start-Up Committee*

The start-up committee will consist of mostly local business owners, along with a few individuals and community leaders from relevant organizations, such as a downtown business coalition.

The committee will bring together various business and restaurant owners from downtown Santa Paula. It is important that the major area of commerce with Santa Paula is represented within the committee, as much of the activity relies on their support and involvement. The committee will also have important members of the community to go along with a city official who can monitor the committee and their activities.

### *2.1.2 Staffing and Other Resources*

The program will require between three and five full-time employees, dependent on the amount of members and work needed from the program. In addition, the program will office space of approximately 300 square feet in order to provide sufficient space for the employees duties.

The program also will need a delivery truck to service the restaurants in the program who purchase goods. Delivery will be daily, in the mornings. The vendors will be responsible for delivering their products to the programs delivery truck.

Estimated cost of the delivery truck: \$30,000 one-time purchase

Estimated cost of employees: between \$150,000 and \$250,000 yearly

Estimated cost for office rental with utilities: between \$50,000 and \$70,000 yearly

### *2.1.3 Kick-off Event Date*

Setting a date gives the start-up committee a concrete initial goal to strive for. The event could be a press conference announcing the start of the campaign, or it could be some sort of celebration at a community center to jump-start the program. The purpose of the kick-off event is to give the program immediate media visibility and help with the initial recruitment drive.

The kick-off event shall take place approximately three months from the date of conception. With the committee set to begin being formed in early June (2012), this means a kick-off date sometime in early September (2012).

### *2.1.4 Name, Slogan, Logo, and Program Profile*

The name and slogan should be both positive and proactive, with the logo professionally designed. The logo should incorporate positive aspects of the city, such as a mountain, skyline, or other recognizable feature of the community. The program profile (see page 5) will describe the programs goals and objectives, as well as explaining how the community can expect to benefit from participation in the program.

### *2.1.5 Campaign Kit*

This is the set of materials that businesses receive when they join the program. The kit incoming members will receive will include the following items:

- A letter welcoming them to the program
- Decals to be placed on the business, signifying membership
- A list of other participating businesses
- Program flyers to give out to customers following purchases

### *2.1.6 Terms of Membership*

Businesses must meet the following requirements to be eligible for participation in the buy-local program:

- Headquarters must reside in Santa Paula
- Must provide goods or products that are grown or manufactured within Ventura County
- Each participating business will pay an incomers fee of \$30 to support the program, as well as cover the costs of the campaign kit they receive

### *2.1.7 Kick-off Event*

The key to a successful kick-off event is holding it in a visually significant spot. A large poster made of the logo should be unveiled at the event, with as many committee members in attendance as possible, ideally wearing campaign tee-shirts. A press release and media advisory will be sent out in the preceding days. At the event, a few committee members should speak to the importance of local businesses and the campaigns goals.

The event will be held at Veterans Memorial Park, due to the open nature of the park, as well as its proximity to the busiest section of downtown. During this event, the logo for the program will be unveiled to the community, followed by members of the start-up committee explaining what makes this program special to them and the community. Following this ceremony any local business owners who wish to be part of the program will have their first opportunity to officially sign up for the program.

### *2.1.8 Membership Recruitment*

With the program in effect, it becomes time to build a membership base. There are various methods to choose from:

- Mass solicitation, such as a letter to local businesses or an ad in the paper
- Store-to-store travel to talk to each business individually about the benefits of joining the program

Following the kick-off event, letters will be sent to all local businesses informing them of the program and its goals, with instructions on how to become involved if they wish to do so. In addition, members of the committee will make unobtrusive visits to businesses and personally engage the businesses to gauge their interest in the program.

### *2.1.9 Next Step:*

Following the recruitment of members, the programs employees will facilitate and regulate the purchasing of goods between vendors and grocery stores/restaurants, as detailed in the next section establishing the programs status as a nonprofit.

## 2.2 NONPROFIT STATUS

### *2.2.1 Establishment as a Nonprofit Organization*

In order to best serve the interests of Santa Paula's agricultural community and the buy-local program in general, it is recommended that the program strive for nonprofit status. A nonprofit organization is defined as an organization that uses surplus revenue to achieve its goals rather than to distribute them as profit or dividends. Among the numerous benefits to being a nonprofit organization are: being tax exempt on any money raised, the ability to act as a publicity vehicle towards socially relevant issues, and the positive aura that surrounds nonprofits creates a good image within the community. The organization can also write-off money spent on time, materials, and donations for tax purposes.

To obtain nonprofit status an organization must achieve these goals:

- Create a board of directors
- Establish board policies and bylaws
- Open a bank account and establish check signing procedures
- File for federal tax exemption
- Follow state and local nonprofit regulations
- Recruit staff and prepare a personnel manual
- Establish a payroll system and necessary insurance
- Develop a fundraising plan

### *2.2.2 Benefits to Santa Paula*

By establishing the program as a nonprofit, Santa Paula will enable itself to spend all income on increasing the productivity of the program, or donating money towards other city-run nonprofit organizations.

### *2.2.3 Next Step:*

The program will come up with an organizational structure for its employees, with the director of the program responsible for gathering the necessary resources for the nonprofit application. The organization will also recruit members and use its employees to keep the program running smoothly by serving as an intermediary between vendors and restaurants.

# PHASE 3

Phase 3 focuses on making and keeping the program a viable option for both the members of the program and the City. It establishes a screening process as well as an open-air market that is intended to give members of the program an additional opportunity to promote their businesses and the buy-local program.



### 3.1 PROGRAM SERVICES

The buy-local program will provide numerous benefits to members that simplify the process of both buying and selling local goods by acting as an intermediary between the farmers and restaurants. This will be accomplished primarily by having a solid organizational structure. When restaurants and farmers join the program, they will be instructed on whom to call within the organization about marketing or buying products.

The goal is to make it as streamlined and simple as possible for restaurants to purchase goods from local vendors. This can be done through a variety of different methods, such as:

- To eliminate negotiations, which can sometimes be contentious, when vendors join the program, they will allow the organization to establish pricing for their goods. For example, the program may set the price of lemons at \$0.25 per lemon, and this price will apply to all lemons, regardless of vendor.
- The organization will provide vendors with a list of restaurants that have shown interest in their products prior to their joining, so that vendors know there is a market for their goods (see Appendix for list of potential restaurants)
- The organization will provide restaurants with a list of products offered by vendors prior to joining, so that the restaurants know the program offers them the goods they desire (see Appendix for list of potential vendors)

In addition to a system that system that simplifies the buying and selling process, it is important to establish a delivery schedule for each vendor, as that is one more issue that could cause a delay in normal negotiations. To remedy this, the program itself will provide delivery to the restaurants, while the vendors will only be responsible for getting the goods to the organization. These services will allow Santa Paula to experience the economic benefits described earlier in the document.

### 3.1.1 Next Step:

The organization will establish a set drop-off time with each vendor, and every morning, following drop-offs, the organization will deliver the products to the restaurant that ordered them.

In addition, the program shall apply for a start-up grant from the state of California (in the Community Development category\_ to fund both the employees in the short-term as well as the initial start-up costs necessary to make the program operate at a high level (delivery truck ,office space, etc.). Ideally, the program will be funded by annual dues collected from its members (both vendors and restaurants), as well as collecting a small portion of revenue from each purchase it oversees between vendors and restaurants.

## 3.2 MEMBERSHIP SCREENING

One of the major jobs for the programs employees will be making sure that all potential members fit the criteria for inclusion. The purpose of this screening is to ensure that the purchasing process between farms and restaurants flows smoothly without conflict. Conflicts that can arise include the price of goods, and delivery of goods.

For local farms, the criteria for membership will be based around the organization “Green America”. Green America certifies businesses that are:

- Environmentally responsible in the way they source, manufacture, and market their products
- Committed to practices that benefit workers, customers, communities, and the environment
- Accountable for their work by continually improving and tracking their progress by operating their business with transparency

For inclusion, local farms must obtain at least a “bronze” seal from Green America, indicating they have started down the path to sustainability and have been shown to positively influence the community they operate in.

For local restaurants that wish to join the program, they must demonstrate their ability to properly integrate local products into their menu. To do this, restaurants will provide the program with:

- A current menu
- Notes about where products could potentially fit with current menu offerings
- Placement of the programs logo somewhere on the menu so that customers are aware of the restaurants participation

### 3.3 SANTA PAULA OPEN-AIR MARKET

The open-air market will provide activities that promote a wholesome, family atmosphere. Events should appeal to all ages, and provide a consumer mix that reaches all aspects of the marketplace.

In addition, the open-air market serves as an extension of the City’s buy-local program. It will give local farmers and downtown restaurants a chance to promote their businesses and sell products during a time when they would either not be open, or would not normally have to chance to give their businesses a positive economic gain.

#### *Goals:*

- Create a positive image of Downtown Santa Paula
- Expose community members to local vendors from Santa Paula and Ventura County
- Generate foot traffic around Downtown
- Provide a forum for community activities
- Maintain and enhance Downtown as the center of retail, social, and civic activities
- Enhance the community as a whole

*When: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Sundays*

*Where: Veterans Memorial Park on Mill Street*

The park provides easy access from Downtown, while not shutting down vehicular travel through Main Street. The early Sunday hours also allow for additional commerce in the area, instead of taking away from operating businesses by doing it on a weeknight.

*Rules:*

- Those who will to be vendors during the market, must either be members of the Santa Paula Buy Local program, or apply for a permit
- All participants must display the name and location of their business or organization on a sign (minimum size: 14" x 30") on their booth
- Participants must be an operating business within Santa Paula, or a agricultural vendor within Ventura County
- Participants must comply with all regulations set forth in the Santa Paula General Plan Safety Element

*3.3.1 Next Step:*

The City of Santa Paula shall come up with a detailed set of rules and regulations for the open-air market.

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# APPENDIX A

## A.I CASE STUDIES

### *A.1.1 San Luis Obispo Farmers Market*

The City of San Luis Obispo's Farmers Market provides Santa Paula with a good example of how a successful open-air market can positively influence the community into buying local. Its variety of services, including restaurants selling dinner, local farmers selling their produce, and giving stores valuable time to exhibit any deals or offers they want the public to know about, makes Farmers Market extremely valuable to the buy-local efforts of San Luis Obispo.

San Luis Obispo's Farmers Market takes place every Thursday between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m., under the control of the San Luis Obispo Downtown Association (DA). The stated purpose of the Market is to "promote business in the Downtown core." In addition to this, the goals of the Market are to:

- Create a positive image of Downtown San Luis Obispo
- Expose community members to retail stores and services Downtown
- Generate foot traffic on Thursday nights
- Provide a forum for community activities
- Maintain Downtown as the center of retail, social, and civic activities
- Enhance the community as a whole

Farmers Market is designed to give DA members (businesses within the legally recognized DA boundaries) an opportunity to advertise their products, or set up areas on the street to sell their products. Farmers Market provides incentive for businesses to become active within the community because it gives them an increased profile during the Market.

In addition to giving DA members an opportunity to increase business, other groups may apply to participate in the Market. This is primarily for members of the agricultural community who wish to sell their produce. The benefits this provides farmers and harvesters stretches well beyond the money they make during the Farmers Market. By being out in the community and establishing relationships, their crops gain credibility, which can lead to increased sales within local grocery stores.

To help achieve the purpose of promoting business Downtown, San Luis Obispo also provides various forms of entertainment to the visitors. Such forms include virtual golf simulators, dance groups, jazz bands, and health and fitness seminars. Sound is monitored to ensure minimal disturbance to the surround neighborhood, as well as an early deconstruction time so that the roads are cleared by 9:30 p.m.

Overall, the City of San Luis Obispo has provided Santa Paula with a successful template to use as inspiration in the creation of their own open-air market. By combining all facets of their commerce, the City has created one night a week where all members of the community come together to engage in a culturally diverse event.

### *A.1.2 Portland, Maine – Buy-Local Campaign*

The City of Portland, Maine launched the “Portland Buy-Local” campaign in July of 2006. It was started by a group of about twenty Portland business owners and citizens. After receiving an enthusiastic response from the community, the initial start-up group incorporated the Portland Business and Community Alliance (PCBA) to form the first Board of Directors and Advisory Board for the program. The City of Portland has provided a positive example with a natural progression from concept to reality for the City of Santa Paula to follow as they begin to develop their own buy-local program.

The City of Portland crafting their program by first developing three areas and goals they wanted to focus on. The focus areas are:

- Informing citizens of the values provided by community-based businesses and their importance to the local economy, culture, and social fabric.
- Group branding, promotion and advertising to elevate the collective profile of our community-based businesses and bring to them some of the advantages chain enjoy.
- Creating strong relationships with local government and the media to inform local decision-making and give a voice to the locally owned independent business community.

The City stages numerous activities throughout the year to keep awareness of the program high. These activities include facilitating regular networking between members, promoting an annual Holiday campaign that encourages in-person shopping, and maintaining an online business directory. Today the program includes over 350 businesses that find new and innovative ways to publicize their involvement in the program, such as “Portland Buy Local” window decals, posters, countertop thank you cards, tee-shirts, bumper stickers, and educational materials in their businesses.

The methods Portland has used to promote their program provide Santa Paula with a solid example to follow in order to get the community informed and aware of the program. Portland has shown that the key to a successful program lies in the public’s awareness, as the program has grown each year since its inception. By following the example Portland has set, Santa Paula has a clear path towards a successful buy-local campaign.



## A.2 WHERE THE LOCAL PRODUCTS WILL COME FROM

### A.2.1 Local Farms

Santa Paula is an area rich in agricultural resources, and is one of the biggest producers of citrus fruit (primarily oranges, lemons, and limes) in the world, and is even known as “The Citrus Capital of the World.” There are numerous farms that could potentially provide local harvest products to local retailers and restaurants, such as:

Toro Mexicano Farms – Producer of sweet red grape tomatoes, orange grape tomatoes, pink cherry tomatoes, sunshine tomatoes, sungold tomatoes, heirloom tomatoes, purple Cherokee heirloom tomatoes, roma tomatoes, red round tomatoes, and brown cherry tomatoes. Toro is located on the edge of Santa Paula, and is incorporated in Fillmore.

Bearfoot Natural Fiber Company – Bearfoot is a small family farm in Santa Paula that raises goats for fiber/wool use.

White Dove Passion Fruit Farms – White Dove is a leading producer of passion fruit in the United States. Located in Santa Paula, White Dove has been serving coast-to-coast since 2004.

Hicks Ranch – Hicks Ranch has 9 acres of Valencia oranges and 3 acres of young avocados. Garden vegetables are grown in between the rows of avocados. Located in Santa Paula.

Healthy Family Farms – A sustainable, pasture-based farming operation. Their livestock is raised from birth and on pasture. No hormones or other artificial enhancements are used, resulting in healthy, sturdy animals. Delivered directly to vendors having never been frozen. Offer chicken, duck, game hens, turkeys, beef, pork, and lamb, to go along with fresh eggs, goat cheese, and other dairy products. Located in Santa Paula.

McGrath Family Farms - McGrath Family Farms is an organic vegetable farm. The 300 acre ranch grows an extensive array of seasonal vegetables. Year round vegetables grow on 24 acres with an additional 4 acres of strawberries and 17 acres of lemons. Located in neighboring Camarillo.

Churchill Orchard – Specializes in citrus fruit. Grows mandarins, tangerines, oranges, as well as various types of avocados. Located in Ojai.

### *A.2.2 Local Restaurants*

Santa Paula has an extensive array of restaurants and grocery stores, specifically in the vicinity of downtown, that could utilize the resources these various local distributors have available.

The potential restaurants are:

Familia Diaz – Mexican Food

Enzo's at the Glen Tavern Inn – Italian Food

Garman's Restaurant and Pub – Irish Food

Hozy's –American Food

La Cabana Restaurant – Mexican Food

La Terraza – Mexican Food

Los Arcos Restaurant – Mexican Food

Mupu Grill – American Food

Rabalais' Coffee, Bakery & Bistro – American/Southern Food

Tia Babe's – Mexican Food

Vince's Coffee Shop – American/Mexican Food

Zapparelli's Pizzaris – Italian Food

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